

PROJECT EVALUATION

F-27-R-5 - Rock Creek Creel Census

The purpose of the Rock Creek Creel Census project is to determine the return of catchable-sized hatchery rainbow trout to the creel and the contribution of hatchery trout to the total harvest of the Rock Creek fishery. This is being done by comparing the harvest and catch estimates of game fish during a 3 year period during which time an average of 30,000 rainbow were stocked annually, with a 3 year period following the discontinuance of stocking. To date, an estimated 43% of the total number of stocked rainbow have returned to the creel. The contribution of hatchery-reared fish to the total harvest of game fish ranged between 23 and 26.4% during the first 3 years of the study and dropped to 2.9% in 1961 and 1.2% in 1962. The ⁷⁰return of hatchery rainbow to the creel was significantly lower from the upper study section as compared to the return from the lower section of the study area. The average 3 year mean of the CPMH for all game fish during the initial 3 years of the study was 0.91. This compares with an average 2 year mean of 0.67 CPMH for the latter 2 years of the study.

Total harvest and pressure estimates are presently being revised and a comparison of these results will be available at a later date.

Under the previous stocking rates and angling pressure, a return of about 40% hatchery-reared rainbow might be expected.

The project is being continued to assess the value of various stocking rates, stocking locations, and the influence of hatchery trout on the wild trout population.